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Ballet today
The National Dance Monthly
EDITOR:
PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

Managing Editor : I. E Herf, 5, Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey(Elmbridge 9743). Annual Subscription 15/-. Advertising: 33, Crawford Place, W.1. Pad. 2038.

Daphne Dale who dances with Festival Ballet in London this month. *Photo: Frame*

Preview..

SADLY, ballet kernels its Mother Hubbard away from frustration. Never does she to her cupboard and find it re. If the ballet mother is a cher's worry, this specific other Hubbard is ballet-ineral's trouble.

Revivalitis, so potent for Billy raham, has been as much a dsend to ballet as public main music has become for pular songsmiths. The revival often damages the original's ng-brewed legend just as some eap lyric despoils the stolen zst or Chopin melody.

To celebrate Diaghilev's cennary, revivals of his ballet proctions are being sponsored. ather like mounting a full rites rial for a fighting atheist. iaghilev, whose creed was "I ill be new," is remembered by a splay of ye olde Diaghilevian onders. Fine. The memorials nnot hurt the dead, but using iaghilev as yet another good unding peg to hang a copy on . . . is this good for ballet?

Everyone has a story, and ery second or third story could ake a ballet. There are combsers. There are painters. And ere might be choreographers such a breed had a meeting ace other than the breadline.

But why gamble? Nostalgia is useful substitute for initiative.

HORT GOODBYE

East Berliners gained by the rench Government's cancellaon of the Soviet ballet appearnces in Paris. Snubbed by rance, the Russians went to a ed-controlled nation where the arty line could force attendance nd applause, if such were not oluntarily forthcoming.

But what a pitiful display by ne onetime capital of the dance. oddling Reds is one stupidity, roviding chapter - and - verse proof for their beliefs is, surely, worse?

Peter Daubeny, who rushed to Paris to try bringing Ulanova and the other dancers to London, was unsuccessful. It was almost certain he would be. But the important point is that he had the snap-decision mind to plane off for the attempt immediately he thought it possible.

His stay in Paris might, as a by-product, have proven to him that some of the advice given to him in London was more angled than accurate. Daubeny was told from several quarters that Martha Graham would be better on her second visit. "The public takes time to appreciate genius." In Paris the public—as in London—stayed away in full force. The art of Martha Graham had its public. Unfortunately most of the generation that provided it has either died off or gone to more fresh pastures.

If I may bring my advice to a man advised too often: repeat success, not failures. What audience did see Graham has spread so much word-of-mouth publicity against her that even less people would turn out next time.

If possible.

RUSSIA NOW

In this issue, four pages are devoted to the first feature in a series: *In Russia Now.*

This series, exclusive to BALLET TODAY, will cover the complete professional scene in Russia, and stress trends in dance art at this moment. It is worthwhile to notice that the series is not the usual propaganda rubbish. A few words of criticism creep in and heroes are less in evidence than usual.

Russian ballet has no need for easy propaganda. Already acknowledged, it needs no sharp publicist to sell its wares. Like the American radio detective, all we want are the facts.

This series will provide them.

HERE, TOO?

If Poul Gnatt's classes in Wellington, New Zealand, are even partially as good as their reports, we could use him in London.

Gnatt is on leave from the Royal Danish Ballet and has been dancing in Australia with the Borovansky Ballet and teaching in various centres. Apparently his classes in New Zealand attracted dancers from all over the islands for a strenuous week of ten a.m.—ten p.m. days.

Speaking of the dancers, Poul said, "You could take any one of these girls and she is as good as any in an overseas corps de ballet. If New Zealand ever has her own ballet, a corps could easily be supplied as good as those in Europe."

"One wonderful advantage," he continued "of the New Zealand dancer is her stamina. These dancers have never lacked enough food like the European dancers. I often wondered how English dancers could be so strong after the hard rationing they suffered."

Gnatt may decide to stay in New Zealand—depending upon the interest his work arouses. "I appreciate a peaceful spot after Europe," he writes, "and I like to see something new coming."

Agreed.

The Elvin and Beriosova Auroras

Ballet in Review
by
PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

REPETITION may dull the emotional impact of Tchaikowski-Petipa's *The Sleeping Beauty*; but even the overfed dancegoer can realize the impact is still there.

Violetta Elvin returned in *Ballet Imperial* after her long absence since injuring herself during the U.S. tour. I can think of no better use for this Balanchine parch than as a test-of-recovery piece. Elvin was correct in using it. A week later she danced in her first major role, that of the Princess Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*.

Her dancing on this evening was somewhat cautious, more self-conscious than it normally would be. But, that criticism passed, there is no more. Her Aurora was a confident, often arch and "look, see how easy" performance. She scooped her role with a zest that the classics always need and seldom receive. That Elvin can still grin her excitement with the role (or her dancing of it) is a guarantee of her future. It must be easy to become used to being merely competent in a company where competence is held higher than brilliance. This is an English trait, of course.

Elvin, luckily, has remained unconcernedly non-English. Unless she stamps a passport visa upon her art, she will never bow to the competent standards all around her. Like the Johnny-come-lately who alone is in step, Elvin will remain our finest young dancer so long as students are content to straddle minor but secure success rather than gamble on the top rung.

BUCCANEER

This, apart from Elvin and an enlightening Florimund from John Hart, was no spirited *Sleeping Beauty*. Hart looked buccaneerish as Florimund, rather than yet another model-girl-faced prince such as we are so used to. As Elvin is a more feminine dancer than we are used to, her presence might well be the inspiration.

The sexlessness of such ballets as *Sleeping Beauty* has long been nonsensical. A man who goes so far to find his girl could not possibly look so removed as Florimund normally affects in his attitude to Aurora. Too often ballet's "lovers" pass each other n the way that stage ballroom-adagio dancers do—affecting a pretence of not seeing the partner and never having seen her before. This is laughable affectation in variety dancers, in ballet it is damnably untheatrical.

Ballet must be the only art with sexes but no sex.

HUMAN

The other revelation of this performance was Rosemary Lindsay who managed to look joyously human and still forbiddingly haughty when set against Carabosse (still excellently overplayed by Ashton who must love the role). If ever a dancer cried obviously to be inspired and worked at top pace, the dancer is Lindsay. A talent completely wasted upon the seniority thinking of Covent Garden. In five years she will either be on the heights or have become yet another faithful pillar of competence who "never lets you down."

God forbid.

Gerd Larsen brightened the Florestan and sisters divertissement, but Chatfield wastes the fact that he continues to dance better by the parallel fact of looking more and more removed from the audience. It might make them outcasts, but I suggest that the men in Sadler's Wells strive towards the audience and human expression rather than trying to keep pace with the already lost superior-looking models who dominate the company.

David Blair danced a young and appealing *Bluebird*, but Anya Linden jumped the role all the way through. Much too stacato, unpolished and quite thoughtless at times. Relaxation is a prime need for the *Bluebird*. Linden can dance the role and it is rubbish for her to throw it away as she did here.

A few days later Svetlana Beriosova danced Aurora.

BRILLIANT

FROM the moment Svetlana Beriosova walked onto the Covent Garden stage for her first Aurora, the performance was brilliant. She pulled a dowdy, dragging, dull production up to the heights, and the audience with her. I have never seen such a first performance. I have rarely seen such an Aurora.

Beriosova has suffered in the past from a one dimensional personality. Stress must now be placed on the word past. She was young, she was glowing, she was all but perfect in this superb *Sleeping Beauty*.

There were three flaws. A bad support during the Rose Adagio, two bad supports during the last act variations. All were minute, of no real importance. The first and second acts were excellent, the third a better performance than most dancers would give after years of Auroras.

OFF-FOCUS

This Aurora had that quality which only the finest of interpretations can boast: it faded into off-focus all the surrounds. Decor corps de ballet, even the impoverished orchestra were forgotten in the beauty of this performance.

Here was the Aurora which makes the critic's job worth doing — the performance that pulls a strained aesthetic digestion out of its lethargy and gives it hands to clap and voice to cheer. The house first warmed, then thrust towards her with a wonderful sound of reaction.

After this, Beriosova could head any company in existence. The Wells next season should be devoted to showcasing Beriosova. No part of the production was worthy of her presence, she outshone everything and everybody on stage.

One exception should be made to this: John Field. His partnering, his interest in her effect, was fine, fine work. His own variation in act three both powerful and visually satisfying.

BAD

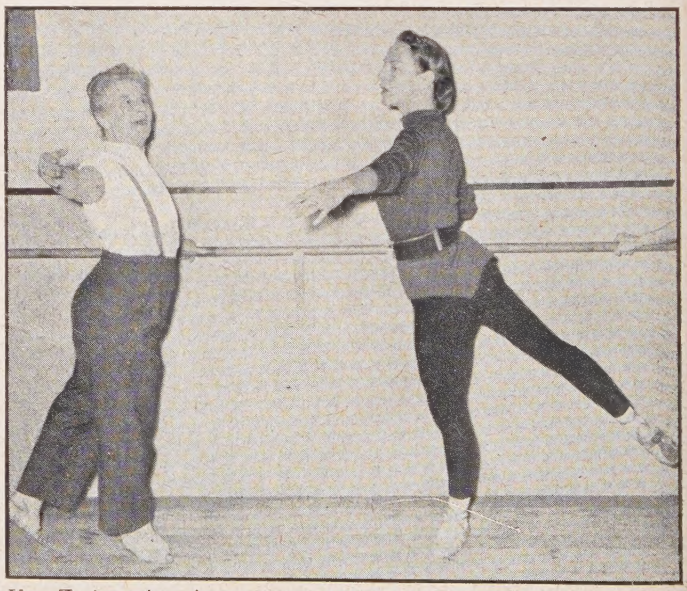
Now to the bad. From the time Beriosova danced, she forced the company to improve so not to be left too far behind. As it was the standard of performance was shockingly bad. Anya Linden repeated her poor Bluebird, Blair dispirited me by allowing a rather poor performance, too. I did not expect this of him. Mary Drage could almost have taken her bad Lilac Fairy as some kind of retribution for her initial smugness.

Rosemary Lindsay and Pauline Clayden danced well with Philip Chatfield in the Florestan divertissement. Lindsay is not being given the expansion opportunity which she must have if she is not to fade into the acceptable mediocrity which is fast becoming the English dancer's nearest approach to brilliance.

I thought that only the variety theatre found lame dogs an excuse for kind applause from English audiences. It is becoming increasingly evident that lame dog dancers can expect kind applause in our theatres. At Covent Garden this fatally misguided applause is becoming criminal. The fools who use it are being kind in the manner of maiden aunts who cottonwool their Pekinese under the delusion that silk and soft are substitutes for fresh air and living.

There is nothing wrong with Sadler's Wells that a little honest *withholding* of applause will not settle.

Failing that, Svetlana Beriosova might have to carry the company in much the way that Margot Fonteyn did for years. That she will be capable of doing this is certain. That she may have to is disturbing.



Vera Zorina takes class at Notting Hill with her one time teacher Maria Rambert. (See story in Aisle Seat). Full reviews and photographs of the Ballet Rambert London season will appear in the August BALLET TODAY. *(Exclusive photograph by courtesy of the Record Mirror).*

ROWENA JACKSON —*Sadler's Wells New Ballerina*

TO become a ballerina in the Sadler's Wells Ballet is not, simply, to take on a new title. Promotion in the Wells is not rapid, and the dancer has little warning. More than this, it is a stiff test.

An audience which will applaud you as a soloist, as one of a number of other dancers, may decide to raise its standards before applauding you as a ballerina. At the Wells this is especially true. As a ballerina the dancer immediately moves into the general area occupied by Violetta Elvin, Beryl Grey and Margot Fonteyn. Tough competition for a young dancer.

An audience which loved you yesterday as a promising youngster may easily steel itself against you when you dare to join the top-rung few. And yet it is hardly your fault, or even your decision!

An icy audience is never good to work in front of —at any time. It has one of two effects and the normal one is that your dancing suffers and you walk lamely through your part. Only the very rare dancer does the opposite of this. Moira Shearer was one. I remember her coming on stage for a ballet in which Margot Fonteyn was supposed to be dancing. You could hear the audience groan in disappointment. Almost any other dancer would have given it up at the outset and produced a bad performance.

Not Moira. She decided to hit back and she fought that audience all afternoon. At the end they cheered her for eleven curtains. Even a biased audience can be won over—if you have the nerve.

FOLLOWING

Fortunately for Rowena Jackson, the young New Zealand dancer who has been officially confirmed as a ballerina, she has a tremendous following at the Opera House. Something in her has, in the past, "got over" to the house and made them her allies.

There are two questions about Rowena. Where does she go from here? And: how did she get here. Let me briefly sketch in an answer to this latter question first, as a background.

Rowena was trained at the Lawson-Powell school of dancing in New Zealand and, in 1941, became the first New Zealander to be awarded the London Royal Academy of Dancing scholarship. With this as sponsor she arrived in London to study at the Sadler's Wells School some five years later.

A year later she was already in the senior company and soon became, officially, a Wells' soloist. Actually her doctor was responsible in some part for her becoming a ballerina—she first studied ballet under his advice as a means of improving her physical health. As a corps de ballet dancer her first real opportunity to show whether or not she had talent came in *Les Patineurs*. A leading dancer was taken ill on stage and Rowena went right on, without either rehearsal or a thought of the role, and finished the ballet. Today although a ballerina, she is so popular in *Les Patineurs* that she continues to dance in it.

A second opportunity came in 1951 when the company was appearing at the Edinburgh Festival. Another illness in the company made Ninette de Valois ask Rowena if she could learn a role overnight and perform the next day. She said yes.

The role was the long, traditional Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*—one of the tests of the prima ballerina.

MANY MORE

Since that first *Swan Lake* Rowena has danced many more. Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* was soon added to her list. This year, when the company returned from their American tour, she was promoted full ballerina. That was in January. A few months previously she had danced one of the four ballerina roles in the Coronation ballet, *Homage to the Queen.*

As I write now, Rowena is on her way to Auckland to dance in the Festival of Arts with her partner Bryan Ashridge. There she will dance in *Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty* and in the grand pas de deux from *Don Quixote*. This will be her first visit to New Zealand since she left for England in 1946.

Returning to London towards the end of August, she will again be dancing at the Edinburgh Festival. And another principal role is in the offing for her. Sadler's Wells are to stage a full repertoire of ballets originated by Serge Diaghilev in this year's Festival. Leonide Massine will revive his famous *Le Tricorne* and *Les Matelots,* and *Firebird* is to be recreated. In one of these Rowena Jackson will dance.

With de Valois' increasing stress on full-evening length ballets (three or four acts) the need for highly-trained classical ballerinas will strain the company's resources. Jackson, as she is developing, might solve part of this problem.

THE "GODS"

Perhaps the most fortunate single factor for Rowena's future is her popularity with the "gods."

Even if the critics are harsh and the stalls cool, some private intercourse seems to go on between her and the thousand-odd ardent balletgoers in the gallery at Covent Garden. They rousingly cheer her at every performance.

The same thing happened during the recent tour of the United States. Everywhere the company went, Rowena Jackson was immediately accepted by the audiences and achieved a startling amount of personal popularity. This is surprising, I think, because Rowena does not use the flamboyant, bravura approach to upbuild her personality. She is a quiet, often over-modest, intense dancer whose mind is wholeheartedly on her work to

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Photographs by Houston Rogers

George Balanchine

CHOREOGRAPHY in our time has one grievous fault: it is not of our time. The teaching of Jesus in this respect is lucid, perfect—when applied to the spiritual individualist. But the same principle, applied to choreography, is as hopelessly miscast as a mirror bronzed over on both sides.

Choreography must take its visible manifestations from perceivable life, and mount a theatricized version of contemporary moving and thinking upon a changing, but traditional, technical basis.

Too often, today, the tradition is static—picked up wholesale from some equally duffing choreographer. And the contemporary orientation is either facile or non-existent. In analysing current choreographers I have always tried to be constructive. Yet, so often, the choreographer is rooted into the style, or pseudo-style he has adopted—not by choice but by sheer lack of knowledge. He has achieved a certain level of choreographic intelligence and remained there, stunted but pie-eyedly confident that his method is the one and only true choreography.

POTENT BREADTH

The devastating fact is that an examination reveals not one single choreographer of potent breadth. Rodrigues produced a competent and, within its limits, imaginative ballet in *Blood Wedding*, but none of the Lorca force was there. Macmillan had a theme (not merely a plot) in *Laiderette* but I was worried as to whether he had deliberatley sought and conveyed this, or merely strung it along as a by-product.

Gore has shown himself so reckless with what talent he possesses that it is hard to take him seriously. Cranko is the kind of craftsman who can add pep to a repertoire—if the repertoire has a full, rounded basis of ballets which keep the stage well. Agnes de Mille seems to split her time between redoing *Rodeo* for half Broadway's musicals and exhausting her limited technical equipment in rather pretentious pieces when opportunity calls. Balanchine is closer to Nat Karson in mind than he is to a creative choreographer. Balanchine wants effects and expects his dancers to supply them. As a choreographer he gives them little to work upon.

ASHTON, PETIT

Frederick Ashton has settled into reviving period classics with the safety-belt of their almost imperishable theatricality proving his messiah every time. On the occasions when he has ventured into original composition he has been seriously hindered by a lack of ideas.

Massine is to ballet what Sears Roebuck is to, say, Galeries Lafayette: a super-salesman who always wins the argument, and the customer. Only in his original ballets does he undermine the international position he has so assiduouly upbuilt.

"Choreography in our time has one grievous fault . . . it is not of our time"

Roland Petit, unfortunately, was out on his own free rein too early in his career. There are brilliant people of two classes—those who achieve results under the thumb, those who have an inner "thumb" to rule them so can achieve independently of outside discipline. Petit is of the former but has not had the needed disciplinarian above him. Today he is too hecticly concerned with all ballet to have the time or energy to produce composed choreography. His is the tragedy of all contemporary genius: the deadline is too near.

IMITATION EASY

Choreography is like criticism. The most difficult of arts, but the most easily imitated. Today choreography is so full of imitators that the new generation is spewing out imitations of imitations. It is as vicious a circle as the current crime of dance teachers without theatre experience training dance teachers without theatre experience to train . . . ad nauseam.

Will choreography come of age? If it does, in the person of one choreographer, will he find a stage? It took a private income to get Petit and de Mille on stage . . . what will it take to get a complete new choreographic trend into the theatre?

One can imagine Sadler's Wells reaction to a violently new trend. And yet the revolt cannot be pasivistic. It will be a bloody massacre leaving the limp-minded copyists dead at their pillaging posts.

What good effect will it have?

ATTRACT TALENT

Firstly, it will attract the serious, talented and influential young artists in music and painting and literature to cohabitate with ballet. Secondly it will attract an audience of mature intelligence and spirit who would no more be in the ballet theatre today than be at a pantomime. Thirdly it will raise the whole status of ballet to that of an adult, contemporary and healthily ambitious art. The pixies, perverts and pale-wraiths will be out.

Is this worth doing?. Anyone who thinks not should have given up this writer long ago and gone swapping gossip with some more congenial host.

This impressive scene shows the dance of the Furies in Hadies, *with ballerina Julia Drapal as Head Fury. It is from the Vienna State Opera Ballet's new production of Igor Strawinski's ballet* Orpheus *which the composer wrote after the war at the instigation of George Balanchine. The ballet was first produced in 1948 in New York.* (Photo: Paul Popper.)

LETTERS

Local Ballet

I have been following your campaign for local ballet companies in the provinces with great interest.

Unfortunately, after having made a very promising start Tyneside Ballet Workshop collapsed as a result of internal friction. The cause of the failure may be taken as a cautionary tale for the benefit of those hoping to form an amateur ballet company.

In a nutshell: the organisation was unable to free itself from the atmosphere of a ballet club—it s my opinion this is fatal to any real aspirations. "Amateur" and "club" are two words which stifle artistic success.

I think the life history of the typical ballet club nearly always follows a similar course: starting off in a blaze of glory, the club then enters into a period of decline; the glory may blaze up again but on the whole it is a depressing picture of the road to ruin.

PROCESS

The process by which this takes place is quite simple: all sorts of people whose only qualification is a vague interest in ballet somehow get themselves attached to the "club," then they get bitten with the idea of dancing and mostly at a relatively advanced age start taking classes. After they have been to half a dozen they want to appear on the stage in public as ballet dancers and very soon they are not content to take supporting parts and resent the principal roles being allocated to the nucleus of real dancers who are the backbone of the club. The ultimate consequence — either everything is dragged down to a lowest common denominator of mediocrity the genuine dancers get discouraged and gradually drop out; or there is an explosion as happened in the case of Tyneside Ballet Workshop. In either case the "phoney" dancers and pseudo arty crafty are likely to be left in possession but an explosion has the advantage that it tends to wake up everyone concerned in it.

NEW GROUP

For this reason the outlook on Tyneside is not as gloomy as might appear from the above. As a result of the split, a new group has been formed with a nucleus of dancers from Tyneside Ballet Workshop under the title of the "Phoenix Ballet Group."

James R. Cooper,
Phoenix Ballet Group

53, Mitchell Avenue,
Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne, 2.

My Photograph of the Month by

Serge Lido

● Yvette Chauvire *photographed by Lido while dancing at the Shakespeare Theatre, Bois de Boulogne.*

Following the reaction to Peter Craig-Raymond's views on Lac de Cygnes two months ago, here the whole question is discussed.

Presenting the Classics

by Richard Austin

THERE is no argument that generates more heat than the one which almost invariably follows a new production of a classical ballet. If so much as a single *enchainement* is altered or a traditional interpretation disregarded there are cries of anger from the gallery bars and critics grumble in their midnight retreats. For the classics are sacrosanct.

In recent years a number of events have added to the controversy: there was Mr. Helpmann's glorious Doctor Coppelius—a red-nosed, wispy buffoon, gouty and myopic, with his mouth drooping in antique guile—who refused to conform to the traditional interpretation of the role.

Then Balanchine's *Swan Lake* for the New York City Ballet and Ashton's interpolations for the Covent Garden production; while only recently we have enjoyed Ninette de Valois' charming reconstruction of *Coppelia*. The unfortunate break-up of the International Ballet, where the classics of Petipa and Ivanov were carefully preserved, has added to the grief of the traditionalist which will not (one feels) be assuaged until they are devoutly bored by the Paris Opera Ballet's version of *Coppelia*, all complete with female Franz, which will probably be seen in London later this year.

SORRY

Of course everyone is sorry about the end of the International Ballet. It has done great service to ballet in this country. Provincial audiences, numbed for years by the traditions of that idiotic and vulgar entertainment Pantomime, have discovered that the spectacular beauties of the classical ballet are not confined to a fat fairy princess in spangles turning *fouettes ad nauseam* to the strains of Rule Britannia.

The International Ballet presented the classics with loving care; they were adequately danced, and well decorated. Mona Inglesby has done for the ballet what Mr. Donald Wolfit has done for the Shakespearian theatre; and just because their productions were inferior to those seen at Covent Garden and the Old Vic respectively, London critics often unjustly attacked them.

But it is difficult to share the attitude that the end of the International Ballet is yet another blow struck at the classical ballets of Petipa and Ivanov. For they were preserved too carefully. Tradition is a living force in the theatre, and their ballets are too good to be mummified "warts and all." With the noblest intentions, that, I believe, is what Miss Inglesby did.

MARINSKI

When the International Ballet presented *The Sleeping Beauty* according to the full Sergueeff notation they preserved (apart from a few minor deletions) the complete ballet as it was first presented at the Marinski Theatre

The performance ran for three and a half hours, and contained so much dead wood both in mime and dance that later productions were shortened. Theatrical taste alters; and much of that production retained pieces like the *pas de quatre* for the Jewel Fairies, which were incredibly banal. Petipa was as capable of composing bad choreography as anyone else; even the great Ivanov presumably composed that painful jog-trot for the four little swans.

Why then should they be preserved?

It has been said that each generation must translate for itself; equally each generation requires the classics adjusted to its own taste. The classics, after all, were made for man, not man for the classics.

The 32 *fouettes*, for example, were a thrilling *tour de force* when Legani danced them at her first performance of *Swan Lake* but they have no meaning today when any muscular girl in Madame Bloggs' academy can do the same—though she probably cannot dance at all.

Now all we have is the sad spectacle of great dancers like Fonteyn doing indifferently that which is not worth doing. Instead there should be new variation composed for them which would display their genius more excitingly. No prince would be dazzled by Miss Fonteyn's *fouettes*; they are not worthy of her, or of any great dancer, and should not be rearranged also.

REARRANGED

There seems no reason why the dances for the *corps de ballet* —the Mazurka and so on—should be cut.

The only quarrel one had with Balanchine when he composed new dances for the second act was that they were little improvement upon the old ones.

That does not mean that Ivanov's choreography here is particularly remarkable.

There must have been many versions of the Waltz in *The Sleeping Beauty*; there is no reason why there should not be as many for that in *Swan Lake*. We must sift the dross, and keep only that which is alive and beautiful for the present generation of ballet-goers.

The Sadler's Wells Ballet has the authority to do this—to amend, interpolate and discard —because it is not a repository of a dead tradition, but the creator of a living tradition for the future. In years to come, no doubt, there will be an outcry if someone decides to scrap Mr. Ashton's beautiful new *pas de six* in Act I of *Swan Lake*.

DESTROY

It is, of course, objected that to tamper with the classics is to destroy them. But it is surely better to whittle away that which no longer appeals, than to keep the classics untouched (even if it were possible) and lose the audience that pays to see them. The Bouronville ballets, for example, are charming; but few would be happy to sit through those evenings of interminable mime and pretty little dances week after week.

The theatre is a place of entertainment not a museum.

The exception is *Giselle* which cannot be altered without destroying it, for, unlike the Petipa ballets, everything depends upon preserving the romantic period background. To tamper with *Giselle* is fatal; to tamper with the other classics is to keep them alive and contemporary in feeling, even if in time they may cease to mean anything. For they may well go out of fashion; but that will not matter greatly, for the choreographers of today are creating the classics of tomorrow.

One day, perhaps, *Scenes de Ballet* will be revived as a perfect evocation of the spirit of the mid-century.

The classics are not sacrosanct. They must entertain; what is dull in them must be scrapped; what could increase their beauty can be added. Tradition is not something static: the great ballets grow and flower as new ideas are brought to them; they grow more healthily when the dead wood is lopped away; they die under the weight of too much reverence.

Towards Chamber Ballet in the United States

SOME small companies of ballet dancers have existed in North America but, in the last year, there has been a surprising increase in their numbers and success. Observers have tried to explain is new popularity of small groups by pointing to changes in the hedules of larger companies.

The big repertory companies nich, in the past, annually ured almost every town in the nited States and Canada, have, irtly due to increasing cost of ne night stands" and partly ie to increased foreign engage- ents, limited their activities on is continent to only a few of the rger cities. It therefore seems atural, say the observers, for wly formed small ensembles supply the small towns' de- and for ballet. This explana- on certainly seems valid.

Yet, I see an additional fac- r playing its part in the "little allet boom": development of horeography especially suited to limited number of dancers, and e dancers' growing awareness the demands and potentials of ch ballets.

In other words, the develop- ent of the chamber ballet and s dancer, for the first time in the istory of small American ballet mpanies, presents them with owerful material appropriate to eir capacities.

ATEGORIES

The small touring groups of ast years fell into two categories: ose which attempted to per- rm diminished versions of the ig ballets (Massine's *Gaite Pari- enne* by a cast of five), and those hich depend on a repertory of hat were essentially (despite a orps of some few, poorly rained girls), pas de deux de- igned to display two star dancers.

An evening of such works may ave held moments of balletic nterest, but was seldom artistic- lly satisfying.

Then, the creation of chamber allets began.

John Taras' *Designs with Strings*, to the second movement f Tchaikowski's trio in A minor, lthough choreographed in urope and now danced by everal large companies, seems o have been the first fully uccessful American chamber allet.

It is of great but tender beauty, and, with a few musicians and six dancers on a simple stage, is well fit for the small ballet com- pany.

EXPLORED

The chamber ballet is far from being fully explored by choreo- graphers. However, certain strong tendencies point to what may become standard form for such works.

I hope my reading of these tendencies is correct, and that my conception of the ideal cham- ber ballet is not too dissimilar from what is and shall be the reality.

Many sensitive choreographers, commissioned to create a ballet for a small company of dancers, soon feel the inadequacy of divi- ing their cast into corps de ballet soloists, and principals.

Zapoteca, an Inca Ballet by Guy Bassett for the Chamber Group "Knights of the Ballet."

The fewer the number of dan- cers on stage, the more important become the movements assigned to each. As in a fine piece of chamber music, each part is care- fully developed to its fullest implications, yet, at every mo- ment, is an integral component in the structure of the whole.

Though movements designed for an individual dancer in a chamber ballet are as complex as those intended for a solo varia- tion, if removed from the context of the well made chamber work, the individual part becomes form- less. I am reminded of two lady choreographers who have com- posed ballets calling for a cast of four: a pas de deux couple and two attendent dancers.

In the work by Ruthana Boris, *Cirque de deux*, the two atten- dants are important to and high- light the pas de deux, which would seem flat, pointless with- out them. However, the ballet by Ruth Page, simply named *Pas de Deux*, is just that. The two attendants could well be dispensed with and, at some per- formances, I believe they were. According to my definition of chamber ballet, Miss Boris has admirably succeeded in compos- ing one, but Miss Page's creation, a lyrical pas de deux, can not be classified in the strict chamber catergory due to loose construc- tion.

The small means employed in chamber works does not neces- sarily produce a small effect. No one sensitive to musical dimensions feels that Beethoven's Archduke trio is a small work. Likewise, no one sensitive to the proportions of ballet feels that the few dancers of Ashton's *Symphonic Variations* are an inadequate match for Cesar Frank's full orchestra. The chamber ballet need not be a miniature.

DANCING

The chamber dancer often possesses a virtuoso technique, proficient as that of the solo ballerina. Yet a ballerina em- phasizes her power as an indiv- idual. Even in the adagio of a pas de deux, choreography for which many critics claim an out- standing cavalier is far more essential than an outstanding prima, proper style creates the illusion of the autonomy and

Above: Marcy Morrow in Arachne Below: Strange Fruit, a Chamber Ballet presented at Chicago University.

individual brilliance of the woman, and defaces, gallantly, the man.

The chamber dancer does not employ technique for self- emphasis. Her style tempers the natural tendency of virtuosity to draw attention to itself. She integrates her performance with other individual performances to fullfil the choreographer's inten- tion; a complete work of art.

American choreographers of chamber ballets seem to be well read, for their themes are selected from the most diverse poetic sources. Their knowledge of the musical literature, however, seems lacking; how else can one explain the insistent use of inadequate two piano arrange- ments of large orchestral scores and of symphonic works rescored for chamber orchestra?

So much excellent and dance- able music written especially for chamber ensemble and duo piano exists but remains unused by ballet.

SMALL COMPANIES

Despite the increasing popu- larity of small ballet companies, the individual company seems economically unstable. The resulting brief life span of these organizations is not conducive to the artistic integrity and team- work needed for the creation and performance of well made cham- ber ballets; yet, some fine cham- ber works are being given good performances.

I shall end this article with a brief description of the leading American and the leading Cana- dian small ballet company, fear- ing that this review may also be in time for their obituary.

To the Slavenska and Franklin Ballet, Valerie Bettis and Zachary Solov have contributed works which demonstrate their ability to overcome the limitations im- posed by small cast, small orchestra, frugal staging. Frank- lin and Slavenska's diminished version of Ivanov and Tchaikow- ski's *The Nutcracker* managed not only to overcome such limitations, but made them vir- tues.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet seems to be a small group attempting transition to large

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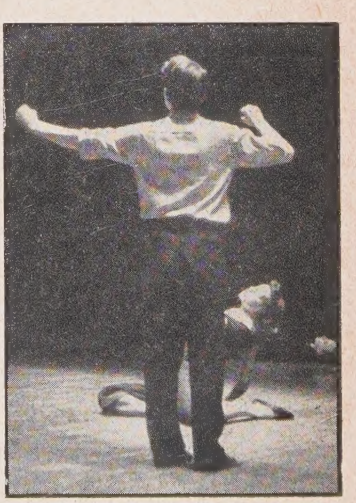

by George Jackson

NEW YORK

—HOPE SHERIDAN

★ The Y.M. and Y.W.H.A. presented a performance by the Spanish dancer, Inesita. Inesita's concert was devoted solely to solo dancing of various types of Spanish dances. A sparkling theatrical performer, she has passion, technic and fluidity of style. Highlights of the performance were three Flamencan Dances.

★ Jose Greco and his company of Spanish dancers bowed in at the Broadway Theatre for a two week stand. Featured with Greco are Nila Ampara, Lola de Ronda, Luis Olivares, Juanele Maya, Salome de Cordoba, Tina Velez, Malena Vargas, and "The Bronze Gypsies"—Jose Mancilla and Margarita Zurita. Opening night highlights were the Fhmenco singers and guitarists, the "Bronze Gypsies" and Salome de Cordoba with Juanele Maya. The latter couples are vital, gusty, lusty, and a real taste of the Spanish earth. Greco, himself, appears to be slightly lethargic this season. The programme is devoted to different types of Spanish dances.

★ Ballet Theatre Workshop presented five ballets of which three were new works. William Dollar was represented by excerpts of his famous *Constantia*, and two new works: *The Leaf and the Wind* (Ramsier) and *Concerto* (Mendelssohn), while newcomer, Bermudian Hubert Farrington offered *Out of Eden* to his own music. Robert Joffrey offered a repeat of *Umpateedle* to music by John (not Johann) Strauss. Featured dancers were Beatrice Tompkins (ex of the New York City Ballet) and Yvonne Patterson (ex of the Marquis de Cuevas Company). Highlights of the evening were Dollar's *Concerto* and *The Leaf and the Wind*. The latter is a fabulously difficult pas-de-deux.

★ Valerie Bettis may dance in *A Street Car Named Desire* as well as stage if for the Ballet Theatre next season. She may also choreograph a new Tennessee Williams' play.

★ Choreographer Massine is rumoured to be talking to Ballet Theatre. B.T. announces that negotiations have been completed for Nora Kaye to rejoin "her home company." Kaye's first appearance with Ballet Theatre will be scheduled after completion of the company's present national tour, which ended in Boston on May 22.

★ Anthony Tudor may restore many of his masterpieces to the Ballet Theatre repertoire for the 15th anniversary season next year. Tudor will restage them himself.

★ *New York City Summer Dance Festival will find the Y.M. and Y.W.H.A. the scene of activities from July 6 to July 11. Organized by Hope Sheridan and D. D. Livingston, the Festival will feature Alaxendra Danilova, Charles Weidman & Co., Pearl Primus, La Meri, Myra Kinch, Geoffrey Holder & Co., Bill Hooks & Co., Katherine Litz, Paul Draper. Also featured will be two new Romantic ballets, and,* still in negotiations, *two major dancers of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.*

PARIS

—FERDINAND REYNA

★ Martha Graham returned to the Theatre des Champs Elysees for six performances from 30 April-May 8. The result is the same as four years ago. With the exception of the first night, there was no public attending. One must admit that Paris does not care for bare foot dancing. In a word, choreographic symbols with all that goes with expressionism and Germanic dancing. Paris, which accepts and discusses all these tendencies, has never wanted this type of dancing. Neither Harold Kreutzberg, or the other dancers of the same calibre have ever gone beyond the first night. Although Paris loved dancing she does not like to go to a performance to work out a quantity of enigmatic symbols—she likes to see *dancing*. This is perhaps strange, but nevertheless true.

★ On April 8, at the Theatre National de L'Opera a performance was given in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the death of Serge de Diaghilev. Programme: *l'Oiseau de Feu*—which enabled Strawinski and Serge Lifar to exchange radio greetings. The composer foresaw a disappointing renewal of this ballet, accusing the choreographer of not knowing the difference between black and white notes. Lifar replied to him by microphone, that he wished Srawinski to go to the devil (which meant, to the Musee Grevin).

★ At the performance, nevertheless, the new version of this famous Lifarian ballet appeared colourless. The stars, Nina Vyroubova (the Bird), Youri Algaroff (the Prince), Christiane Vaussard (the princesse) and Lifar in the role of Katschei were the interpreters. Costumes and decor by the artist Wackewitch. At the same performance; the *Spectre de la Rose* with Yvette Chauvire and J. P. Andreani.

★ At the Theatre Etoile, the "Brasiliana" Company was an immense success. Direction Miecio Eskenazi. This company well pleased the Parisians with their typical folklore dances.

★ Alicia Markova danced in Paris on the 29th April and 4th May at the Theatre Chaillot with her new partner Milorad Miskovitch. The programme consisted of: *Pas de Deux de Casse Noisette* and *Les Sylphides*, a bolero directed by the choreographer Ana Ricarda and written specially for Markova. Her style is always as great as ever and envelopes the public. Milorad was an excellent parsner—elegant, and always in the right setting. Particularly in *Casse Noisette*, where he was a real Prince, with great gallantry.

★ The Association des Ecrivans et Critiques de la Danse de Paris gave a lunch in honour of the occasion at St. James Club on May 3. Markova and Miskovitch were greatly welcomed by the Press.

HOLLYWOOD

★ Ballets de Paris tour was cut short by Sol Hurok. The company will spend twenty weeks working for M.G.M. on *The Glass Slipper*, Cinderella story set for Caron and to be choreographed by Petit.

Antonio, a drawing by Zita Mazza

★ Gene Kelly is scheduled to guest appear in M.G.M.'s *The Glass Slipper*, the Roland Petit production for Leslie Caron.

★ A new Balanchine ballet, on Western themes, is planned for its premiere in Los Angeles this summer.

★ Katherine Dunham is teaching Silvana Mangano two dances for the production *Mambo* in which Dunham stars.

★ Valerie Bettis is choreographing M.G.M.'s *Athena* for Debbie Reynolds.

★ Eugene Loring will do Metro's major Sigmund Romberg story *Deep in My Heart*.

★ James Jamieson re-created Agnes de Mille's dances for the Edwin Lester Civic Light Opera production of *Brigadoon* at the Philharmonic.

★ Legendary name, Gilda Gray, at the Turnabout Theatre, is drawing crowds with her famous "Shimmy Dance" which made her the rage of the "roaring twenties."

★ George Zoritch, of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in its golden days, is to be the male solo lead for the dances in Warner Bros. *Helen of Troy*.

COMING

Coming portraits in the BALLET TODAY series by June Ryan and other artists include Michael Somes, Svetlana Beriosova, Patricia Miller, Nora Kovach, John Gilpin and Beryl Goldwyn.

Over thirty new photographs of Moscow ballet productions and dancers will be published in the coming issues of BALLET TODAY's exclusive "In Russia Now" series. This series is unique in its total lack of typical Communist propaganda and has been carefully compiled to give a balanced picture of the important dance work in the U.S.S.R.

Next month: the study of choreography commenced in this issue (Bronzed on Both Sides) will be continued with a long and penetrating analysis of John Cranko's work. The three new Rambert ballets will be reviewed and illustrated. On the cover will be a photograph, taken by a new method, of Svetlana Beriosova. This may well prove to be the most realistic ballet portrait ever published by a dance magazine and it serves to introduce to readers a photographer with brilliant ideas whose work will appear regularly in this magazine.

Portrait
by
FREDERICK
WORKMAN

Text
by
RICHARD
AUSTIN

Renee Jeanmaire

RENEE JEANMAIRE looks like a sophisticated tomboy and thrives upon such a contradiction of charms. Small and daintily built she has an air of disarming impudence in her smile and up-tilted nose, yet she can also radiate a cool elegance that is superbly Parisian. Indeed at times she brings to the stage all the grace, gaiety and sensual beauty of that most lovely of cities, while, beneath it all, is concealed something of the mischievousness of an urchin schoolboy.

Every performance, even when she is miscast, is an exciting experience, she seems to mock her audience, to flirt, to cajole; for her ballet is no grave esoteric cult but a physical delight which she can communicate to the dullest spectator. She has enough sex appeal to warm a whole British company, enough wit and gaiety to inflame the heart of a Free Dancer.

Yet Jeanmaire is a most conscientious artist. Essentially demi-charactere *she manages through sheer stagecraft and boundless self confidence to present herself in the famous* pas de deux *of classical ballet with an imposed—though none the less effective—dignity of style.*

She will be remembered above all for her interpretation of Roland Petit's Carmen, *which is one of the greatest single feats of modern ballet comparable only with Fonteyn's Aurora and Nora Kaye's Hagar in* Pillar of Fire. *It is impossible to forget her languid beauty and voluptuous grace when, heavy with remembered passion, she danced before Don Jose in the bedroom scene of that ballet. Her face mirrored every motion of physical love from disgust to delight and the hunger of reawakened desire.*

Indeed that performance represented the fusion of personal magnetism and conscious artistry which alone would justify the inclusion of Renee Jeanmaire among the great dancers of our time.

Ballet In Russia Now :

the first article o
Today Series, by

I : LENINGRAD

LENINGRAD, with its two state academic theatres—the Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet and the Maly Opera Theatre with ballet companies of over two hundred and one hundred dancers respectively—has much of interest to offer ballet enthusiasts.

Each of these theatres makes from fourteen to sixteen ballet appearances a month, not counting the ballet scenes in various operas, such as *Ivan Susanin, Ruslan and Ludmila, Prince Igor and Sadko*, in which a large part of the ballet company is engaged.

The present repertoire of the Kirov Theatre contains twenty ballets, eleven of which are of contemporary authorship and nine of classical legacy. The Maly Theatre this season is showing ten ballets, of which only one (*Coppelia*) belongs to the classics, the rest being contemporary productions.

Apart from this, four original ballets are presented regularly by the Gorky Palace of Culture, where about two hundred dancers—children and adults—attend dancing classes in their spare time.

Other popular dance performances are the concerts given by the famous Ballet School; ballet shows and recitals by the theatres and dance companies of Moscow and the national republics, notably the Folk Dance Company directed by Igor Moiseyev; performances by foreign guest companies from Poland, China, Czechoslovakia, Korea, Rumania, Hungary, Albania and other countries; shows by the travelling company of classical ballet and dance performances by the city's various houses and palaces of culture.

To form an idea of Leningrad's versatile ballet life one would have to spend at least a couple of months visiting the theatres and concert halls.

NEW PRODUCTIONS

In the past two years the Leningrad ballet has staged six new productions.

The Kirov Theatre has revived Tchaikowski's *The Sleeping Beauty*, and produced *Native Fields* to the music of Mikhail Chervinski (scenario by Nikolai Korin, producer Alexei Andreyev, artist Igor Veselkin).

The Maly Opera Theatre has produced the ballets *Solvejg* to the music of Grieg (producer Leonid Yakobson, artist Valentina Khodasevich), and *The Seven Beauties*, music by Kara Karayev, the Azerbaijan composer (scenario by Yuri Slonimski, Ismail Idayat-zade and Sabit Rakhman, producer Pyotr Gusev, artist Soliko Virsaladze). The Gorky Palace of Culture has shown the ballet *The Stone Flower* based on Bazhov's well-known Ural fairy tale, music by Georgi Fridlander of Sverdlovsk (scenario by Konstantin Keller, producer Boris Fenster, artist Tatiana Bruni), and *The Cherished Apple Tree*, a ballet about the young pioneers of the Arctic region (scenario by Roman Slavsky, composer Andrei Petrov, producers Victor Tulubiev, Georgi Kurov, Valentina Katisheva and Alexei Zhitkov).

Not all these ballets, however, are of equal merit. *Native Fields*, for instance, dealing with life on a collective farm, came in for a good deal of criticism in the press and from the public. Two other new productions—*The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Seven Beauties*—are extremely popular with Leningrad audiences

The Sleeping Beauty, with other ballets by Tchaikowski, is a masterpiece of classical ballet. The original production by Marius Petipa (1890) has survived to this day, and is a treasure-house of the classical school from which all modern producers and performers draw inspiration. To meet the repeated demands of the ballet public, Konstantin Sergeyev, the ballet master, in co-operation with Soliko Virsaladze, the designer, has succeeded in producing a new stage version of *The Sleeping Beauty* which, while retaining all that was best in the technique of Petipa, has considerably enriched the dramatic action of the ballet.

The hand of the decorator, who has a keen and intelligent appreciation of the music, is in evidence throughout the ballet. Colour, light and shade, architectural and constructive details, texture and design of the costumes—the whole faculty of this artist's imaginative expression is applied to embodying the ideas and images of the ballet, first and foremost, of the music. Virsaladze in this ballet has shown himself to be a subtle interpreter of Tchaikowski's music. This perhaps is the most impressive achievement of the new production.

Virsaladze's scenery conveys to the spectator the poetic spirit of the music, which has prompted him to restore to the ballet the fairy-play element which it lacked in the previous production. The artist, moreover, has helped the producer to contrive a number of effective scenic devices.

He has treated each act in a tonality which fits the music. The prologue is handled in a colour scheme of blue, from purple to sky-blue.

COLOUR SCHEME

The first act is a symphony of green, admirably expressing the blossoming of life implicit in both the plot and the music. Even the costumes of the peasants in the famous waltz scene weave themselves so harmoniously into the decorative scheme of the park, that the dance's emotional impact is like that of a paean to the vernal powers of nature.

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Sergeyev, the p
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ENLIVENED

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The two scenes below are from The Sleeping Beauty *as staged at the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad. Left: the prologue, right: Act* 3. *Above on the righ produced at the Maly Opera House.* (*Photographs: N. Melikhov*).

lusive Ballet

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is a dazzling bravura of sun-
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has discarded Petipa's com-
e *adagio* and *allegro* staged by

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Act 4 *of* The Seven Beauties *as*

KENNETH MELVILLE is leaving the Sadler's Wells Company at the end of the present season to go to America in the Robert Helpmann production of a *Midsummer Nights Dream*. **Greta Hamby, Rosemary Valaire,** and **Henry Naughton** will also be leaving the company.

FOUR famous ballerinas had a happy re-union at a Kensington Hotel the other day. They were **Kheschinska, Karsavina, Lydia Kyasht** and **Nadia Legat.** It was the *prima ballerina absoluta* from Paris who called them together she felt that fate might not grant such a fortunate opportunity again—and so the four little ladies spent a very pleasant afternoon exchanging reminiscences of old times in the Maryinski Theatre of Tzarist days. **Madame Kheschinska** is still frail after her recent accident and cannot walk much. **Madame Karsavina** has not been well of late and looks far from robust. **Madame Legat,** restlessly pre-occupied with a thousand interests, reflects the tension of her strenuous life. **Madame Kyasht,** grown plump and "comfortable," reveals the calm of a placid nature and belies her whitening tresses by the glowing, ageless quality of her smile. They spoke much of departed friends—particularly of Nijinski and of Nicholas Legat. What a privilege to share this conversation, probably the last these four will ever have with one another!

Paul Stefen's dancers in "Bolero" during their appearances in Spain

VIOLETTA ELVIN starts a rather interesting, or at least inaugurating, tour of Wales on June 29 for local impressario **E. Kellond.** With **John Field, Peter Clegg, Angela Walton,** several young dancers and pianists, Violetta tours six towns with a ballet concert as it should be: all dancing, little en'tracte music.

Apart from excerpts—Sylphides, Lac, Sleeping Beauty, Casse and Veneziana—John Field is choreographing a solo for himself and Elsa Brunelleschi is choreographing a Spanish piece for Violetta and Peter Clegg. Violetta herself bows as a choreographer with a number to a Glinka mazurka and one to a Rubenstein waltz.

It will be interesting to see Elvin and Field out on their own. And Peter Clegg's works should be worth watching. The four new choreographies, too, will be of interest. Towns to be visited are Neath, Maestag, Pontypridd, Cardiff, Swansea and Porthcawl.

UNEXPECTED support for my tiresome and continuous decrying of applause during actual ballet, as opposed to act curtains and final curtain, come from **Beverley Baxter.**

"I think the continuity" he writes in the *Sunday Express*, "is broken too much by not only allowing applause but commanding it. We do not applaud in opera when a soprano hurls herself upon the High C, but these ladies of the ballet get a hand every time they make a safe landing. It breaks the spell and, therefore, it should at least be rationed."

Sadly, example to the good is not there. Ninette de Valois applauds fullsomely from her box (she also speaks loudly enough to be heard on stage, I'm told, but this might be a premeditated and salutary technique for aweing the dancers!) My elder brother critics see nothing wrong with intermittent applause. And kind souls ruin my pleasure in having them recognise me by letting me hear their stage-whispered comment: "Oh, he never applauds anything." If, instead of rushing madly for the exits at the end, these same souls watched me as assidiously as, apparently, they watch me, when their eyes should be focused opon the stage, they would see me applauding then.

It is still doubtful whether Beverley Baxter and I would agree on many things. But at least we can be seen applauding in the right place: at the end.

WITH the emergence of the Mercury label in the disc field here, the battle and the boom are on with few holds barred, and no ballet unrecorded. Or so it will be soon. The E.M.I. combine (H.M.V., Columbia, Parlophone) are already pacing the market with their extravagantly regular issues of ballet music and, they tell me, much more is to come. Pye Electric is breaking into the market, too, and Phillips are to' issue what they call "longer', works later this year. Decca still upcoming and successfully so, has a good ballet catalogue which is to see more additions. Mercury and its subsidiaries will be issued by the Oriole management here and should make quick incision. One of their first ballet sets is of the Scheherazade suite.

READERS who have asked how it is that we reported Roland Petit's company at work in Hollywood and the Soviet Ballet as not appearing in Paris, are asked to contact the magazine which reversed both these items of news last month. If they find the wrong story on one page, they will find the correct one (as published here) on another page of the same issue of the same magazine. Our curtain perhaps goes up later in the month than some, and so our news is, perhaps, just that: news.

Aisle

A COMMENTARY ON

Norah Kovach with Madame Kshessinskaya in Paris

IT would seem that someone at the B.B.C.'s orchestral music department is resolute in a dark intention to have *Prometheus* revived. Last July I wrote on this lost ballet which outcame a collaboration in the early 1800's between Beethoven and Salvatore Vigano. Since then I have heard the overture and ballet music played constantly on odd B.B.C programmes. A few weeks ago the B.B.C. Welsh Orchestra again programmed this, together with a Strawinski arrangement of Tchaikowski's *Bluebird* (Sleeping Beauty) music.

I would recommend the Promotheus music for one of the smaller companies. An excellent short ballet, perhaps in pastoral style, could be mounted upon the four movements. While about it, is it not past time that Ibsen's *Masterbuilder* became a ballet? Scenically and dramatically the Solness tale could make a dominating dance drama. But, with the help

E MONTH'S BALLET

of this unknown conspirator at Portland-place, perhaps Promotheus will come first.

GOING to Claridges to meet the Vice-president of American Columbia discs might be expected to yield one of several interests. But a totally unexpected one was his wife. She turned out to be **Vera Zorina,** the Ballet Russe ballerina.

Vera is to revive *On Your Toes* for Broadway later this year. Meanwhile she is trying to coax her husband towards the holiday segment of their business-and-holiday combined trip. She hopes to settle in Spain for a month as part of the vacation. In London she returned to her old teacher—of course—**Rambert.**

Rambert seems, somehow, to have been everybody's teacher! Vera told me she had been turning cartwheels in class the first morning she arrived. I join her in asking: where does the energy come from? Zorina herself was looking wonderful, I hope we see her in London again before very long.

MOIRA SHEARER spent nearly three actual months on set for *The Man Who Loved Redheads.* When I telephoned her at Shepperton to ask how she felt at having the last reel in the can: no success. I was shunted from Chertsey number to Chertsey number in my endeavour to find a once easily-accessible Shepperton.

The explanation may be that **Alex Korda** was fully busy explaining his part in the whole British Lion affair. The end of the film and the end of the state loan to Shepperton's filmmakers coincided.

Meanwhile Moira told **Roy Nash** that she was anxious as to whether filmgoers would like her as an actress. "If not," she said, "it will be back to the ballet." She feels it unfair on her husband and daughter to expect them to allow her the dedication ballerinadom demands.

It is also, perhaps, unfair to think of ballet as a second string.

DANCERS who have been asked by an advertiser to pay towards making test shots of themselves for inclusion in a casting library for commercial television: don't. Never pay anyone to find you work—pay the normal percentages on contracts signed and with money received. The dancer who parted with £75 for this purpose during June may serve as an example to others. She is still without work and will remain so until she uses some better method than this. And she is £75 the poorer.

I WOULD also recommend **Svetlana Beriosova** to Mr. Gorlinsky's notice. He could give her the management sense which would rapidly build her into a dance attraction of, I think, first importance. Her recent work, especially as Aurora, proved her exactly the type of artist personality to instantaneously capture a wide audience. She has the basic quality for concert work on a large scale: immediate personal magnetism and audience contact.

At 21 Svetlana—a product of Lithuanian birth, Russian training, American environment and French dance tuition (plus English slow-but-sure development technique)—knows now the effect of her *Sleeping Beauty.* The symptoms of her worth have been evident for more than a little time. In 1947, at 14, she worked with her father (Nicholas Beriosoff of Festival Ballet) in the ill-starred Metropolitan Ballet. Joining the Wells she is becoming a cog in the promotional system there which might work in moving prisoners from mailbag-sewing up to trusted librarian, but hardly helps in ballet.

One newspaper headlined a story "Covent Garden Hails New Prima Ballerina."

Ena Noel, the Australian Aborigine Dancer, now touring Europe

Distinguished visitor at the first night of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet's season in Johannesburg was Danny Kaye. *He is seen here with the three South African born Principals of the Company. They are, left to right:* David Poole, Maryon Lane *and* Patricia Miller.

BUT, in fact, they have not even given her the title ballerina, let alone hailing her as prima ballerina. Svetlana told one reporter that "it does not matter whether I am prima ballerina or not as long as I dance the parts."

During the performance, **Ninette de Valois** left her box. I had hoped this was to effect one of two things—whether to get a closer vantage point, or to surreptitiously improve the Beriosova billing on the posters. Sadly, the latter has not yet come about.

I think it should, and soon.

SOME brilliant reporting is appearing under **David Raher's** byline in **Gordon Keith's** *Dancing Star* . . . **Svetlana Beriosova** will dance the Princess role in Sadler's Wells new production of *Firebird* . . . the company seems happy with this production which I am told is much more dance-stressed than Balanchine's Goldwynesque version.

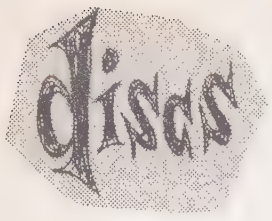
BRIEFLY

The Takuho Azuma **Kabuki** Dancers recently seen in New York will tour Europe under **Hurok** aegis, opening first in Paris, February, 1955, and London in March . . . **Margot Fonteyn** and **Michael Somes** televised on June 9 in *Lac,* Festival Ballet, have a telecast before their June 15 opening at Festival Hall (June 14 will see the London "preview" of *Esmeralda* in a charity performance) . . . **Anya Linden** took over Beriosova's role in *The Shadow* at the end of May and *Tiresias* was revived with Fonteyn . . . interesting that the **Joyce Grenfell** show originally was to cast various supporting acts, finished up by booking only **Beryl Kaye, Paddy Stone** and **Irving Davies** with their dance act . . . Yet another major theatre went under the hammer last month for the pitiful sum of £3,000—the Oldham Royal . . . A new young dance group is a-forming on Tyneside . . . **Angelo Andes** demonstrated his pupils' Spanish dancing on June 4 . . . Some 2,000 theatrical events are scheduled for this summer in London Parks including Ballets **Minerva** and the **Ballet Rambert** . . . The **Hammerstein/Rogers** musical *Kismet* will follow *The King and I* into Drury Lane . . . *Airs on a Shoestring* will have a provincial tour after it closes at the Court . . . Reliable rumour has **Belinda Wright** as leaving Festival Ballet. **Wolfgang Brunner** has already left . . . **Alicia Markova** will tour Britain again starting October . . . **Veronica Papworth's** *Star* column printed a recipe for mayonnaise dressing entitled Les Sylphides Mayonnaise . . . very acid ingredients, incidentally . . . The new floor-show at the Regent-street Eve club run by **Helen Archer** and **Jimmy O'Brien** is especially good and, I'm told, guests at Juan-les-Pins during August . . . it uses several minute modern ballets . . . I'm told that some interesting developments can be expected from Festival Ballet's **Noel Rossana** . . .

CHAMBER BALLET in the UNITED STATES

—From page 9

size. Its young Canadian dancers have adequate technical training, but only its two European principals, Carlu Carter of Sadler's Wells Theatre and Eva von Gencsy of the Salzburg Opera, possess interesting theatrical style. The company's ballets, like the company itself, seem in transition from small and chamber works to large scale productions, thus suffering from indecisive style.



PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION (Mousorgsky) *La Valse* (Ravel). Paris Conservatoire Orch. (Ansermet). Decca LXT 2896.

Visions was in the repertoire of the late International Ballet and by the Swedish choreographer, Julian Algo, who drew from Moussorgsky's music. It is to be deplored that, at least temporarily, the repertoire of this company should be lost to the ballet world. This work is very finely played and the recording is exceptional without any doubt. *La Valse*, an old favourite, is also of a high standard.

Goyescas (Granados). Nikata Magaloff (piano). Decca LXT 2900.

This very attractive work of Chopinesque flavour, has been used by both Pilar Lopez and Jose Greco. Magaloff plays with a firmness the lyrical flow, bringing out the elegance that inspired Granados, in Goya's paintings and tapestries. I should like to hear more from this talented pianist. Recording and surface extremely good.

Romeo and Juliet, and *Francesca da Rimini* (Tchaikowski). St. Louis S.O. (Golschmann). Capital CTL 7048.

There were moments that I shall long remember in Lifar's *Francesca da Rimini*—the poetic beauty of the Heavenly Vision and Rostoff's excellent characterisation of Malatesta. Tchaikowski is well served here and Golschmann is good though I find Cantelli's Romeo and Juliet a finer and more moving performance. Recording and surface good.

Children's Corner (Debussy). Belgian Radio S.O. (Andre). Telefunken TM68013.

Here is another record of one of Cranko's ballets that has always interested me because of its promise and originality. It was A. Caplet, one of Debussy's most ardent disciples, who with the composer's consent, orchestrated the piano score. As Andre shows us, the result is most entrancing and has an ingratiating delicacy of its own. Recording good.

Piano Concertos K488 *and* K491 (Mozart). Curzon (piano) L.S.O. (Krips). Decca LXT 2867.

It was the Arts Theatre that did such valiant work in 1940, keeping ballet alive in London. Their difficulties which were great, were only overcome by staging small scale works such as Keith Lester's symphonic ballet to K491. Two Mozart concertos on one disc is good value but Curzon is not quite up to the standard we expect of him and the orchestral detail could have been a little more well defined. Recording satisfactory surface good.

Violin Concertos—Bruch's No. 1, and Mozart's K207. Varga (violin), Philharmonia Orch. (Susskind). Columbia 33SX1017 —Bruch's No. 1, and Mozart's K219. Heifetz (violin), L.S.O. (Sargent). HMV ALP1124.

Dolin composed *Pas de Réve*—a pas de deux with music from the Bruch Concerto—to show off Toumanova's precision and controlled technique, and his own very fine partnering. In the choice of these two discs, I have no hesitation in going for the Heifetz. It costs you more but his fireworks have warmth and feeling, as does his Mozart.

*Sinfonia Concertante K*364 and *Symphony* No. 35 (Mozart). Brainin (violin), Schidlof (viola), London Mozart Players (Blech). HMV CLP. 1014.

Balanchine's ballet to this heavenly concertante, has basic ideas similar to Ashton's great success, *Symphonic Variations*—in this case, the violin is represented by two ballerinas, the viola by a danseur noble and the orchestra by the corps de ballet. This is undoubtedly the best all round interpretation and recording on LP so far, while the reverse side is nearly to the same standard

Daphnis and Chloe, Suite 2 (Ravel). *La Mer* (Debussy). N.B.C. Symphony Orch. (Toscanini). HMV ALP1070.

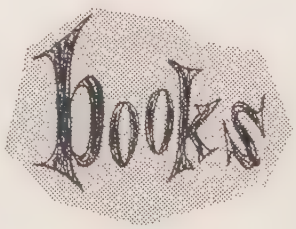
For those who want but a part of *Daphnis and Chloe*, this second suite should certainly satisfy them. Toscanini conducts brilliantly, and with it one has a brilliant performance of La Mer. He feels the music and understands the atmosphere that Debussy wanted. It is a fine record.

The Perfect Fool—Ballet Music (Holst). *Tintagel* (Bax). *The Wasps* (Vaughan Williams). L.S.O. (Weldon). Columbia 33SX1019.

Holst's score for his opera, *The Perfect Fool*, has a particular type of humour that is all his own. His daughter said that it was inclined to be repetitive but judging from the ballet music, I feel sure you will agree that this statement appears to be hypercritical, as it is both interesting and enjoyable. Weldon gives a good account of all three works on this disc, with some fine playing by the L.S.O. The recording is particularly good and clear.

Here are some attractive discs from the new 7 inch E.M.I. Extended Play series: Strauss' Wiener Blut and Kunstlerleben (Columbia SEL 1503), *and Morgenblatter with Mendelssohn's Ruy Blas Overture (Columbia SEL* 1501). *Two Rossini overtures, The Silken Ladder which Christensen used for* Con Amore, *and The Italian Girl (Columbia SED* 5502). *Finally a suite from* Casse Noisette (*Columbia SCB* 116) *excellently conducted by Kajaran.*

B. C.



SELECTED STORIES from the Ballet. By Ursula Rosveare. (Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd. 15s).

These sixteen stories from well-known ballets have already been broadcast by the author from the Midland Region of the B.B.C. They are simple and well told for children as stories in their own right without reference to the balletic action and with a certain amount of imaginative additions, liberally be-sprinkled with dialogue. There is a photographic illustration for each ballet, but some of these might have been selected with more circumspection—Carnaval, for instance, has a background of balustrade and aspidistras!

My Dancing Days. By Phyllis Bedells. (*Phoenix House*, 21s.)

One of the first lessons Phyllis Bedells learnt when, at the age of thirteen, she became a professional dancer, was how to take a curtain call. At rehearsals for *Alice in Wonderland* she was made to practise this by Seymour Hicks before an empty house. Each time she curtsied he insisted that she said "Thank you" under her breath—a lesson in sincerity that she never forgot.

She had been given the part of First Oyster in this production and, dressed as a sailor boy, she emerged from a large oyster shell to dance a hornpipe. The follow-year, in 1907, she joined the ballet at the Empire Theatre, earning enough to pay for her London home and support herself and her mother. Eventually she reigned as Queen of the Empire Ballet in succession to Genee and Kyasht.

It is illuminating to read of the richness of the ballet scene in the London of those days. At one period Genee could be seen at the Empire, Pavlova at the Palace, Diaghilev at Covent Garden—the cast list for *Carnaval* makes one's mouth water: Karsavina as Columbine, Nijinsky as Harlequin, Bolm as Pierrot, Fokina as Chiarina, Nijinska as Palilpon and Cecchetti as Pantalon!—and Kyasht, also at the Empire, partnered by Volinine. Previously, in 1908, Kyasht had been the first Russian to appear in London, wearing the shocking new tutu that did not reach the knees, and for the first time the ballerina was seen with a male partner and in supported work. This was considered very easy for the ballerina, for it was not realised how different and difficult was the technique involved.

Phyllis Bedells' story is the story of ballet in England up to 1935 when she retired from the stage, and in the telling many notable personalities in the world of the theatre and of music help to turn the pages. She refused to Russianise her name, and laboured actively to build the tradition of a national ballet in the founding of the Carmago Society and the R.A.D. As an inspired teacher, she still pays her contribution to ballet.

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A scene from Act III of the ballet The Seven Beauties *produced by the Maly Opera Theatre in Leningrad.*
Photo by: N. Melikhov.

N RUSSIA NOW

FROM PAGE THIRTEEN

ipa were charged with poetic aning—the Prince's delight at sight of the Sleeping Beauty s followed by a desire to hold fleeting vision, but Aurora's idens did not allow him to proach her and fired the uth's imagination. This is ssing in Sergeyev's interpre- ion.

These illustrations give only approximate idea of the merits this new production of the nous ballet. *The Sleeping auty* has always been a serious t for ballerinas and dancers of grades. The artists of the rov Theatre, young and "old," aded by such brilliant dancers Natalia Dudinskaya (Aurora) d Konstantin Sergeyev (Prince) ve passed this test with flying lours.

VEN BEAUTIES

The Seven Beauties first peared on the boards in ovember, 1952, at the Opera d Ballet Theatre in Baku. sev, who produced the ballet the Leningrad Maly Opera eatre a year later, co-operated th Virsaladze, whose scenery d costumes greatly enhanced e emotional and spectacular ect of the ballet. The press, tists and members of the pub-, who discussed the ballet at conference, unanimously agreed at the pledge of the ballet's ccess was its musical drama- rgy.

The main theme of the ballet —the relations between the people and its ruler, the young Shah Bahram, is interwoven with another theme in which the old vizier plots to seize the throne and contrives to estrange Bahram from the people, whose interests are defended by Menzer, the warrior. A third sub-plot is represented by the tragic love of Menzer's sister—the beautiful Aishi—for the unworthy Bahram. The fourth and final line is that of the seven beauties, an illusion which haunts Bahram and prevents him from responding to Aishi's love and doing his duty towards the people.

The existence of four collateral lines in the plot of this ballet is rather unusual and makes for greater dramatic effect while at the same time enhancing the poetic qualities of the piece. The action is continuous, revealing ever new traits in the character's behaviour and attitudes.

This applies not only to the individual characteristics but—and this is far more complicated —to the composite image of the people. We see it entrusting Shah Bahram with the defence of the country and rushing into battle against the enemy (Act I). We see it, plundered by the vizier's servants, helping the Shah to regain power in the hope that he will punish the oppressers (Act II). Deceived and betrayed, it flings a challenge in the face of tyrants through the mouth of its noblest sons, who are bound in chains (Act III). Appealing in vain to the mercy of the Shah, who is deaf to the people's sufferings, it demands of its unworthy ruler that he abdicate (Act IV). And finally, it spurns Bahram, the murderer of Aishi, and consigns him to oblivion. The character of the people, both in the spectacle and the music, is endowed with great dignity.

The music of *The Seven Beauties* has placed the young composer Kara Karayev in the front ranks of Russian ballet composers. A gifted pupil of Shostakovich, Karayev manages the modern palette of musical colours with consummate skill. The music of the ballet, which draws deeply from the found of native folklore and is handled with bold imagination, is strikingly national in character. The figures are expressively etched, and the symphonic images of joy, sorrow and anger, popular protest, and Aishi's love and grief are expressed with great power. The dance episodes are gripping.

The credit for this belongs to the ballet master Gusev, formerly known as a talented teacher and dancing partner to Ulanova and Lepeshinskaya. One is at a loss to say where Gusev has succeeded most—in the direction of the *mise en scenes* or the dances proper, the mass scenes or solo performances, the classical or character dances.

VALUABLE

The critics and distinguished members of the profession con-

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THE DANCE PARIS DIDN'T SEE . . .

Galina Ulanova as Giselle, N. Gabovitch as Albrecht in the Moscow Grand Theatre production of Giselle.

(photo: Ymhoba)

diary

Violetta Elvin, John Field Tour

Violetta Elvin, John Field, Peter Clegg, Angela Walton, several young dancers and pianists will present ballet concerts through Wales during the next two weeks. Excerpts from various classics, plus new choreographies by Violetta Elvin (her first), John Field and Elsa Brunelleschi will be staged.

June 29: Neath

July 1: Maesteg
3: Pontypridd
6: Cardiff
8: Swansea
9: Porthcawl

London Ballet Circle

Lydia Sokolova, ballerina of the Diaghilev ballet, will relate her reminiscences of those historical days to a meeting of the London Ballet Circle on July 18, 3 p.m., Salle Erard, 18 Great Marlborough Street, W.I.

Festival Ballet at Festival Hall

July 15-24: *Esmeralda*
26-31: *Casse, Symphony for Fun, Pas de Quatre*
Aug. 2- 7: *Lac, Alice, Beau Danube*
9-14: *Esmeralda*
16-18: *Sylphides, Scheherazade, Spectre, Igor*
19-21: *Sylphides, Petrouchka, Spectre, Igor*

— PART FIVE —

IN BALLET today

H

Melissa Hayden, American dancer who has been with N.Y. City Ballet and Ballet Theatre. She first appeared professionally with the Volkov Ballet in Canada (she is Canadian), later in revues before joining Ballet Theatre in 1945.

Anne Heaton, English dancer (born: Birmingham) with Sadler's Wells.

Robert Helpmann, Australian dancer, legit theatre director, actor and choreographer. Born in 1909 he began his career with Pavlova during her company's Australian tour. Before coming to England was under contract to the huge Williamson theatrical firm. Joined Vic-Wells Ballet and its various successors. In 1933 he danced Satan in *Job* and, the following year, became premier danseur of Sadler's Wells. He created roles in *Haunted Ballroom* (Tregennis), *Checkmate* (Red King), *Prospect* (O'Reilly), *Apparitions* (The Poet), *Nocturne, Les Patineurs, Sirenes.* Among his own ballets are *Comus, Hamlet, Adam Zero, Miracle in the Gorbals, Don Quixote,* etc. He appeared in the films *Red Shoes, Tales of Hoffman,* etc., and is currently working on *Midsummer's Night Dream* for the N.Y. Metropolitan.

Rosella Hightower. American dancer. Born in Oklahoma, she danced with various American groups (Ballet Russe, etc.), before joining Ballet Theatre as a ballerina, afterwards again appearing with varied groups including Markova-Dolin, Massine, Original Ballet Russe (1946 version) and then Le Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo and, as it has become, the Grand Ballet de Marquis de Cuevas. Here she is prima ballerina. Her roles include *Piege et Lumiere, Giselle,* etc.

Paula Hinton, English dancer, born Essex, 1924. A Ballet Rambert product (*Facade, Carnival, Carnival of Animals,* etc.), she became ballerina of the Walter Gore Ballet (married to Gore) in 1953.

Doris Humphreys, American dancer (born Illinois) she studied central European idealogists before coming under St. Denis and Shawn and joining their Denishawn group. Later worked with Wiedman and has become famous in the modern dance genre. Still working in the U.S.

I

Mona Inglesby, English dancer. A Ballet Rambert product, she danced in various Rambert ballets before founding her own company, International Ballet, in 1940. With I.B. she was prima ballerina and sometime choreographer. Her roles included Swanhilda, Odette/Odile, the Gloveseller (in Massine's *Gaite Parrisien*), etc. Last year the I.B. was dissolved and the school connected with it is being reorganised.

J

Renee Jeanmaire, French dancer (born Paris) who began her career with the Paris Opera, after tuition there, in 1939. She later worked with Ballet des Champs-Elysees, Ballet de Paris, etc., before becoming a film name in *Hans Andersen.* Currently she is on Broadway in *Girl in Pink Tights* for which she (but not the musical) has received wonderful notices.

Juana, English dancer specializing in pseudo-(but interesting) Indian and Oriental dance. Main training under La Meri in whose company she danced from 1940 on. In 1947-8 became recital dancer and has made several world tours and London appearances, last at the Fortune Theatre.

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DANCERS

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DANCING STAR

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Three's Company—and Four's a Revue

THE Three's Company dancers and Joyce Grenfell tied their talents from June 2 in a revue at the Fortune. All four worked enormously and had to pad out their material to make a full evening's entertainment. But Joyce Grenfell could never be less than a delightful wit and an original caricaturist.

The dancers—Beryl Kaye, Paddy Stone and Irving Davies—all have American musical experience and such cabaret pasts as the Savoy. Their work is an enginious pastiche of dance ideas. I think it makes for enormously effective theatre.

Altogether they do sixteen numbers during the evening. That would strain any company of talents. Three may be company but here it had to do the work of a crowd. That so much of it was excellent proves how powerful a concentrated dosage would be.

MODERN DANCE

Alfred Rodrigues and Wendy Toye co-operated on choreography, the beautiful costuming was by the de Bethels, dances ranged from a skit on palais atendees to a Frankie and Johnnie act, from a Basque imitation to a Gene Kelly rosy-cheek-youth dance.

And Joyce Grenfell has a wonderful skit on modern dance which is just one of a gawk of pert material.

Three's Company—and this four make a well-polished revue. The taste and artistic integrity should stand witness that the atrocious taste af many large West-end shows is as unneccassary as it is vulgar.

The director is Laurier Lister. The theatre is the Fortune. This isn't a show for critics, just for recommendations. Here is mine: go see it.

AUSTRALIA

—GERTRUDE BODENSWIESER ON MODERN DANCE

EOPLE often wonder: how does a Modern Ballet get on in Australia?

et me tell you something ut my experiences. When I e to Australia 15 years ago my then Viennese Ballet, er an engagement with J. C. liamsons, my dancers thought t they would stay here only the usual period of a few ks or months. But things took fferent turn as the War broke only a few weeks after my val.

here I was with my dancers, stly young people, cut off n their homes at a time when elling was almost impossible. spite of this we never felt randed." Owing to the great fulness of the Australian ple, I was able to establish my ool in Sydney and soon found e following.

fter the Williamson engage- nt had come to its end, David rtin, then Director of the utiful Minerva theatre, now d as a cinema, engaged us for eason and when this engage- nt came to its end, we gave a es of recitals in Sydney and Capitals of Australia.

he Russian Ballet under onel de Basil's direction had season at the same time in ney with all its great dancers oumanowa, Riaboushinska, ge Lifar—to name only a —with all its splendour of or and brilliance of presenta- h, but that did not deter us.

had myi Vennese dancers with —experienced dancers, some whom had toured the world h me—and had danced in st of the capitals of Europe, uding London. They were onents of the Central Euro- n Dance, as it then was called. objection so often heard inst the Modern Dance, that id not show enough technique, ld not be raised, for it was de obvious that this form of ce had a technique of its own, easier than that of the tradi- al ballet—but different from

AR'S END

When the War came to its end, ny of these dancers left stralia ,some to go home to stria, others got married and ne of them made their home England. I could have gone k to Vienna to my old posi- n (I was Professor at the State ademy of Music and Dramatic t in Vienna) but I stayed in stralia.

came to like the country and people and I had discovered ne great dancing talent here. There can't be any doubt that stralian youth shows great ent in the field of dancing. We ve only to look at the English ge to see how many dancers renown are of Australian and w Zealand origin. Sportive, ce many generations, and dowed with beautiful figures, y can quickly get hold of an cellent technique. But what of the indefinable that can't be taught, the emotional strength and the mysterious gift of conveying it.

Would I miss the European soul? I was lucky also in this respect. The girls, who were attracted by the Modern Dance and its dramatic force, were naturally people who were longing for self-expression, people who were driven by a dynamic desire to commit themselves to the world. After some years of serious studies, the first Australian Modern Dance Group was formed.

The immediate post-war time made travelling impossible, but new ballets were created and performed within Australia, amongst others the four act Ballet *O World* (based on Krishnamurti's philosophy) in which the New Zealand dancer, Shona Dunlop (now married to a missionary and doing excellent work in teaching African native children) excelled. The people of her native country, New Zealand,

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—PIGEON CROWLE ON THE BALLET SCENE

BRITAIN, and her Dominions overseas, are good dancing partners and equal one another in their aptitude and enthusiasm for the dance. This feeling is deep-rooted in Australasia for it applies to her aboriginal as well as her white population.

A famous teacher from England, one of the first to open a ballet studio in Australia, was deeply impressed with the material that awaited him—"beautiful girls, magnificently formed, and with every talent for ballet dancing"; while an equally famous American teacher, in his study of primitive dance throughout the world, described the Northern Australia aborigines as "superb artists as individual performers," and was astonished at the "general excellence of their group movements—which had that intensity and richness that makes for great dancing."

PRE-1914

Adeline Genee first brought ballet to Australia on a pre-1914 visit. Later in 1926, came that great pioneer, Anna Pavlova, on one of her comet-like progresses, which invariably left a wake of aspiring dancers. It is interesting to recall that one of these was a young Adelaide boy, Robert Helpmann, who was attached to her company for sometime as a pupil of her partner Novikov.

Spessiwa paid a memorable visit in 1934, and this was followed by the first of the highly successful de Basil companies. Several of the company decided to stay, including the Danish ballerina Helene Kirsowa, a pupil of such teachers as Legat, Preobrajenska and Egorowa.

Moira Clavx and Eileen Cramer of the Bodenswieser Ballet

KIRSOWA

Australia had now become ballet-conscious, and in 1940 Kirsowa formed the first permanent company and toured Australia in a repertoire of old and new ballets.

One of her leading dancers was Henry Legerton, and a rising young painter, Loudon Sainthill, the designer of decor and costumes. She had no difficulty in finding dancers, for Edouard Espinosa, in the course of many visits from England had founded large schools and clubs in Melbourne and Sydney, teaching the highest tradition of classical ballet.

Two of the de Basil dancers, Edouard Borovansky and Menia Nicolaeva, became teachers in one of these schools and formed an amateur company whose members worked at their various occupations during the day and attended classes and rehearsals at night.

When the Kirsowa Company temporarily came to an end, the Borovansky Ballet was put on a professional basis, with a second, though amateur, company and a large school that supplied both. Ballet had come to stay, and on their long tours throughout Australia and New Zealand, they invariably found the theatre sold-out wherever they were due to appear.

In 1946 they presented the first ballet with a national theme, *Terra Australis*, the story of the conflict between the white and black man for possession of the continent.

NATIONAL

By 1951 Australia had its own National Ballet ,and four dancers from the Ballet Rambert seem to have been largely instrumental in bringing this about, with the help of Gertrude Johnson who appears to be the Australian Lilian Baylis.

There were now a number of companies forming and dissolving in a manner not unfamiliar on this side of the hemisphere, and at one time as many as five different ones were giving *Coppelia*.

To poge 21

ALEXANDER GRANT

A photograph of Grant which may surprise even him—taken in 1943 in New Zealand, during one of his first appearances.

ALEXANDER GRANT was born in Wellington, New Zealand in 1925, from the very earliest stage in his life, he made up his mind that one day he would become a dancer. First of all, his parents decided to send their son to Kathleen O'Brien's school, then later to the school of Jeane Horne in Wellington; but in 1944 he reached the first important milestone in his career, he was awarded a scholarship by the Royal Academy of Dancing.

This was only the second scholarship to be awarded to a New Zealander, the first being won by Rowena Jackson two years earlier. When the news of his success reached him, he was overjoyed; but there were still a great many difficulties to be overcome; just one of which was the not so small matter of the few thousand miles from Wellington to London.

At this time the war was still very much on, there not being the faintest chance of being able to obtain a passage to England yet. At the end of 1945, having plagued the port authorities for month after month, a Captain must evidently have taken pity on him for he offered him a passage to London, along with twelve other passengers, in his cargo boat.

But he was not there yet, for the journey alone took six weeks, in which they travelled right round by Cape Horn.

MEMORY

February first, 1946, England: a day that will long live in his memory, little did he know then that another of his ambitions was to be fulfilled that month, to be dancing at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Immediately he landed, he joined the Sadler's Wells School; a few weeks after, whilst still a student, he was selected with Donald Britton, to dance the Popular Song in Frederick Ashton's *Facade*, also the Old Man in *Khadra*, for the newly formed Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

His stay with this company was short-lived though, to be precise he remained with them a fortnight, in which they visited Exeter and Brighton. Later he returned to London, to understudy a role in the now famed revival of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which heralded the return of the Sadler's Wells Company to Covent Garden for the first time since the outbreak of war. A dancer was off, and Alexander Grant was on, dancing the Farandole in the second act, later he progressed to dancing one of the Three Ivans, the leader of which he still dances so successfully.

In August, that same eventful year, he reached the second important milestone in his career. His studentship was completed, he was officially made a member of the first Company.

VARIETY

Since joining the Company, he has danced a great variety of roles. Leonide Massine recreated the role of the Barber in *Mam'zelle Angot* for him; a great experience which he thoroughly enjoyed; but he found it extremely arduous, for he had to memorise the intricate steps, from a film of the original production of the ballet.

The result being that every few minutes they had to stop the projector, in order that they might memorise the steps they had just seen, then put them into practice. Massine later created the role of Donald in *Donald of the Burthens* for him, which also marked the successful return of Beryl Grey after her illness, in the part of Death. Incidentally one of Grant's most treasured experiences last year, was that he was asked to dance a few of Donald's solos at the Coronation Ball, held at the Savoy. Also in this wonderful cabaret were Noel Coward and Maurice Chevalier.

To name a few of the great variety of roles he has played: The Miller in *Le Tricorne*, The Rake in *The Rakes Progress*, a role which he had long wanted to play, The Spirit of Fire in *Homage to the Queen*, The Gravedigger in *Hamlet*, and Byraxis the Pirate Chief in *Daphnis and Chloe*. As a striking contrast to all these roles, he can now be seen in the part of Franz in the new production of *Coppelia*, and as Eros, the God of Love, in *Sylvia*, one of the few roles he finds "mildly restful."

ENJOYS

Grant greatly enjoys touring with the company; one of his favourite tours was when the Sadler's Wells visited Prague, Warsaw and several other central European towns. He also visited Turkey, in company with Michael Somes, Moira Shearer and Anne Heaton. Now he is off on his travels again, this time to Spain. Although he enjoys travelling, he is always glad to return to London, which he now looks upon his as home, or rather home from home.

Some years ago, Grant made a film entitled *Steps of the Ballet*, in which he and Gerd Larsen participated, Andree Howard having devised the choreography. Ironically enough, on one of the company's American tours, this film followed the company around, for wherever they went, *Steps of the Ballet* followed.

As far as his other interests are concerned; if he is not to be found at the theatre, or not still dancing; the chances are that you will find him outside in some car park or other, rag in hand, proudly polishing his new luxurious looking blue car, which he has recently acquired. If you want to ask Alex which role he enjoys most, he'll reply with a sly grin, "The one I'm going to do next."

Nicholas Valentine

BOOKS—From Page Sixteen

Though the style is that of the amateur writer and is a little bare, the book impresses by its unpretentious sincerity and by the painting of a theatrical scene that is no more. There are a large number of photographs of Miss Bedells as a child ,and in productions that range from a pre-1914 *Sylvia* at the Empire to *Hiawatha* at the Albert Hall in the thirties.

The Blue Train. By Joan Selby-Lowndes. (*Collins*, 8/6.)

A small boy named Patrick Kay was consumed with the desire to learn dancing, and a sympathetic mother saw that his wish was granted. He became a pupil of Astafieva, famous Russian teacher, and eventually, as Anton Dolin, joined the Diaghilev company, to be given his first leading role a few weeks later. One day he was discovered practising handsprings and backfalls. The idea of a ballet dancer performing acrobatics was new and startling and as a result *The Blue Train* was expressly created to exploit the new dancer's athletic facility. He became, at the age of twenty, the first English dancer of international fame.

Dolin's early childhood and youth have been woven into the form of a novel. Though it skates but lightly over the splendours and miseries of life in the classroom and in a famous ballet company, it is simply and sincerely told, and should prove popular with juvenile readers.

P. C.

AUSTRALIA

—From Page Nineteen

MODERN DANCE—*cont.*

became interested. We were asked to tour New Zealand and were enthusiastically received there. We pioneered the Modern Dance in Australasia and no wonder that it had an appeal in countries where the spirit of the pioneer is still alive.

Other countries took notice of us and overseas tours were following. We made history in touring as the first all-Australian company abroad. We toured South Africa in 1950 and I had the satisfaction to read in one of the leading papers there that from now on the Australian dancers will have their place in the International field of the dance. In 1952 we toured India and are invited to make a return visit there towards the end of this year.

TASMANIA.

In Australia itself we made extensive tours, sponsored by the Arts Council of Australia, which does an immense work for the advancement of culture within this country. In one of the other states (Victoria) there is a similar institution as in New South Wales, called the Council of Adult Education and we toured this state under their auspices and had a most enjoyable three months tour. An engagement to tour Tasmania by the joint invitation of the Society for Theatre and Fine Arts and Tasmania's Council of Adult Education was on our programme and we were just about to tour this lovely Island when I was approached by the Arts Council of Australia to lend my dancers for the Royal Command Performance on the occasion of the Royal Visit. Needless to say, we were delighted to accept this invitation. We postponed our Tasmanian tour and are now looking forward to tour this Island as soon as winter—we have winter here while you have summer—will be over.

You will see by the above that there are big cultural movements here at work, which are furthering art in Australia. In spite of their keen activities, there is still not sufficient opportunity given to the performing artist in Australia, mostly because there is no place where a Ballet can perform.

London, with its many theatres, will find it difficult to understand, that Sidney has only two legitimate theatres as all the others have been converted into cinemas.

And these two theatres have mostly long runs of musical comedies and are not available.

At present I have the manuscript of one of Menotti's ballets in my hands and am quite taken by this most interesting work. Although I have no idea where and when I can carry it out, and although no theatre nor orchestra is available, I hope that some miracle will happen to enable me to give it its baptism in Australia.

This is at present my most cherished plan for the future. Up to now, more a wishdream than a plan.

BALLET—*cont.*

Ballet fever has spread with the rapidity of a bush fire. Ballet is now subsidised by the state in New Zealand as well as Australia, and schools are springing up everywhere. Teachers visit out-back townships by plane and find classes of sixty or more pupils awaiting them. As a result of a grant by the Australian Coal Board, classical ballet is taught in mining centres.

INTERCHANGE

Between Britain and the two young countries there has been a constant interchange of dancers, choreographers, musicians and designers. Those from Australasia include Robert Helpmann, Alexander Grant, Henry Legerton, Elaine Fifield, Rowena Jackson, Gordon Hamilton, Cecil Bates, Loudon Sainthill, Kenneth Rowell and John Antill.

England has sent the Ballet Rambert, besides various well-known teachers, and such Rambert dancers as Walter Gore, Paula Hinton, Joyce Graeme, Margaret Scott, Brenda Hamlyn, Rex Reid and that unique artist, Sally Gilmour, have made outstanding contributions to the art in Australia.

When the Sadler's Wells Ballet pays its long-awaited visit, it will be welcomed by many friends.

John Field who appears with Moira Shearer in the "Man Who Loved Readheads" Film

Short Reviews . . .

● Both Lemoine and van Dijk danced the *Don Quixote grand pas de deux* during the last week of Charrat's London season. I missed Lemoine (we had no warning of these appearances) but did see van Dijk and Helene Trailine. This is not such a happy vehicle for van Dijk as the *Cygne Noir*, but his performance is still excellent. Trailine danced well, sometimes superbly so. She has the unhappy knack of changing rapidly from confident verve to worried caution which makes her work unbalanced. But, when she is dancing well, the result is fine work.

● Pauline Clayden shows enough in her *Giselle* to make interesting what she might achieve in the role. Weighed-down by the tragic uniformity which years in the Wells produces, Clayden yet manages an amount of personal feeling in the role. Her mad scene was not overacted and benefited from this. Rassine danced well as Albrecht, Peter Clegg's work in the act one *pas de deux* was also impressive. Cynthia Blowers was colourless as Clegg's partner, Mary Drage was less than expected as Mythra. (April 24 matinee).

● Ashton's *Les Patineurs* stands up to constant repetition, over years, quite incredibly Michael Boulton in the Brian Shaw variation (as it has become accepted) was sometimes unfirm, and his final fouettes travelled badly. But his work is definitely ground enough to say that he might well be a dancer of note soon. (April 24 matinee).

● Although *Job* possesses a large cast (writes N.V.), it is entirely dominated by two characters—Satan and Elihu. Many well-known dancers including Robert Helpmann and Anton Dolin, who created the part, have danced Satan; but few have been finer than John Hart, who gave a splendid over-powering performance. Alexis Rassine, as Elihu gave one of his best performances this season.

● A recital by the Hilde Holger School at the Steiner Hall during May was rather outside the scope of this reviewer. Mostly it consisted in a dancing display by very young children. However of the more advanced dancers shown, only a balletically trained and a Balinese girl stood out, the one by her ease of stage effect, the other by her natural physical movement. The recital did not, in fact, show the system taught by Hilde Holger to any obvious extent which is, at least, disappointing.

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IN RUSSIA NOW

FROM PAGE SEVENTEEN

sider some of the ballet's episodes a valuable contribution to choreographic art. These are the competitive dance of Bahram and Menzer, the grand *pas d'action* (Act III), the three *pas de deux* of Aishi and Bahram, and the mass dance scenes.

A word or two about the duet of Bharam and Menzer. The young warriors make each other's acquaintance in a contest of strength and agility, in the art of wrestling. The duet based on the masterly technique of the classical dance, has been skilfully given a local Azerbaijan colour. The dance brings out the characters of the two youths. Menzer is simple and open-hearted, and friendly disposed towards his "adversary": Bahram is somewhat condescending and self-admiring, and a hint of arrogance and egoism, which later develops into despotic cruelty, can be detected through the charm of youth.

We should like to mention the grand suite in the Act II—the dance of the artisans demonstrating their handiwork. The figures of the seven beauties are less interesting in both the music and staging.

The ballet performances staged by the Gorky Palace of Culture are worthy of note. This company, consisting of amateur artists —factory and office workers, scientists, college students and housewives—has produced quite a number of classical and new ballets.

The Stone Flower is the first ballet to be staged by an amateur company in which the developed forms of the classical dance (*adagios*, variations, *pas d'action*, etc.) have been fully utilised. This ballet has to be seen to appreciate the merits of the leading dancers, among whom we find a girl student, a woman designing engineer, a workman from the Kirov Plant and a shop assistant in a grocery.

That amateurs are approaching the skill of professionals is borne out by the practice of the Palace of Culture, many graduates from which have eventually become solo performers on the professional stage. The main inference to be drawn from the productions of the Gorky Palace of Culture in Leningrad is that amateur ballet art is capable of advancing and training new talents.

DEBUT

The other new production of the Palace of Culture—the ballet of *The Cherished Apple Tree*—is interesting in that its authors are only just making their debuts and the whole company are young beginners. Petrov, who wrote the music, will be graduating from the Leningrad Conservatoire only this year, the producers are artists of the Kirov and Maly theatres, and the performers pupils of the secondary schools who have never before danced in leading parts. The young people have brought to this spectacle the audacity, freshness and ingenuous charm of youth.

The story of young Michurinites who raise an orchard in the Far North is told in a simple and entertaining way. Petrov's music is full of youthful verve, humour and lyricism, having a character of its own, like the heroes of the play to which the composer has devoted his score. No wonder the young audience reacts to this play about their generation in the most lively manner.

The Cherished Apple Tree is now firmly established in the repertoire of the Leningrad ballet, and its authors are continuing their work on new productions for the professional stage. This has become almost a tradition. The ballet scene in the opera *Sadko*, for instance, recently produced at the Kirov Theatre, is the work of Yuri Grigorovich, who has produced two ballets on the stage of the Gorky Palace of Culture, while the *Sport Suite* by Andrei Petrov is now being performed in concert recitals of the Ballet School .

ROWENA JACKSON

(*From Page Five*)

the exclusion of thinking of tricks to capture the audience's eyes.

Some critics have put this quietness down as a national characteristic. I cannot agree. Alexander Grant, one of the best men in the company, is also a New Zealander. His dancing—in *Homage to the Queen* for instance—is fiery, uncautious and fully developed with a certain sense of showmanship.

I think it must be accepted that Rowena Jackson is not of the current crop of bravura dancers. She is a romantic dancer whose personality blends into the gentle and the lyrical rather than the ryhthmic and full-blooded.

This may be no liability.

In the next ten years more and more dancers will endeavour to force a more dynamic technique upon themselves and upon the ballet audience. The ballerina who, unruffled, goes smoothly through her roles as a withdrawn and rather magic creature may well prove a quiet oasis, as popular in the rougher sand of ballet as the water oasis is in the desert.

Certainly I think Rowena Jackson will, like the oasis, stay cool and stay with us for quite a time to come.

Nijinski's Notation

LEGAT EDITING

ONE of the busiest people in ballet this year is Romola Nijinska. She has been appointed artistic adviser on the American film of her late husband's life which is being made in Hollywood and Paris (another version is being made by the Soviet Film Industry jointly with the French, and she will probably have some say in that, too, when she comes to Paris later in the year).

Meanwhile, she is much occupied with her literary interests, and above all hopes to bring out Nijinski's system of Notation, on which Nadia Legat is acting as Editor and collaborator.

"This system of notation was Vaslav's pet subject," says Romola. "He would feel badly if it were not published as I cannot copyright any of the ballets he wrote down by this System: "Till," "Faun," etc.—as long as the System is not published. Nadia, Romola feels, is the only person who can edit the work, because there was so close an interchange of ideas between her and Nijinski during the lucid years before his death.

But Nadia says Vaslav's "manuscript" gives only *indications* and still needs an enormous amount of working out, hence the completion has been hanging fire for more than four years.

V. Zimin and L. Ssafronova of the Maly Theatre *Phot by: N. Melikhov*

BALLET TODAY is published from 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, by I. E. Herf Tel.: ELMBRIDGE 9743. Advertising: J. Stonebanks, 33 Crawford Place, W.1. Tel.: PAD 2038. Printed by Richard Madley Ltd., 54 Grafton Way, W.1, England. Subscription rate: 15/- one year. U.S.A. $2.50. SOLE AGENTS: Australasia—Gordon & Gotch, Ltd. South Africa—Central News Agency Ltd. Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland—Kingstons Ltd. Spanish subscriptions to: Libreria J. Villegas, Preciados 33, Madrid. ALL UNSIGNED MATERIAL IN BALLET TODAY IS BY THE EDITOR WHOSE OPINION IS NOT, OF NECESSITY, REFLECTED IN SIGNED CONTRIBUTIONS BY OTHER WRITERS.

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